

Becoming a Visitor-Friendly Church

1. First Impressions
 - a. What is your web/social media presence?
 - b. How easy is your church to locate?
 - c. How easy is the main entrance to your church to locate?
 - d. Do you provide parking places for visitors?
 - e. Does your church's appearance look inviting to visitors?
 - f. Is your foyer attractive to visitors?
 - g. What does your church foyer reveal about your church's culture?
2. First Interactions
 - a. Who are your greeters greeting?
 - i. Do you identify your greeters?
 - ii. Do they spend most of the time with members?
 - iii. Are they intentionally looking for visitors?
 - iv. Do your greeters know how to politely discern a visitor?
 1. "Do you worship here frequently?"
 2. "What brought you here today?"
 - v. Can they recognize the five types of visitors?
 1. People who do not frequent any church services
 2. People from other denominations
 3. People brought to church by friends, relatives, etc.
 4. Adventists who are not very engaged with the church
 5. Adventists from another town or Adventist church
 - b. Do you have a plan for engaging visitors?
 - i. Do you have someone that can give them a tour?
 1. Show them children's classes, mother's room, etc.
 2. Do you take them to their class or into the sanctuary?
 - ii. Do you have a gift for them?
 - iii. Do you have a plan to learn & remember their names?
 1. Guestbook/guest card
 2. Nametags
 - iv. Do you share with them about the calendar for the day?
 - c. Are your greeters representative of our faith?
 - i. Are they winsome in their presentation?
 - ii. Are they loving and non-judgmental?
 - iii. Do your greeters have the gift to make people feel comfortable?
 1. Smile
 2. Open Posture
 3. Forward Lean
 4. Touch
 5. Eye Contact
 6. Nod
 7. Space
 - iv. Are they evangelistic minded?
 - v. Do they know how and when to transfer guests?
 - d. Do your greeters know their objectives?
 - i. Put people at ease
 - ii. Meet people's needs

Equip Expo

- iii. Make people feel genuinely cared for
 - iv. Make people feel at home
 - v. Make people feel comfortable
 - vi. Make people feel needed
 - vii. Make people feel loved
 - viii. Make people feel important
 - ix. Make people want to come back
 - x. Keep the people we have happy
 - xi. Help people meet new friends
 - xii. Represent Jesus to people
3. Worshipping Together
- a. Do you have people that will sit with visitors and engage them?
 - b. Do you have a Sabbath school class that is appropriate for visitors?
 - c. Is your service revealing excellence in every area?
 - d. Do you embarrass visitors by calling them out during the service?
 - e. Is your service order easy to follow for a visitor?
 - f. Do you use lots of confusing “insider language”?
 - i. For example: GLAA, ADRA, vespers, camp meeting, pathfinders, AY
 - ii. “Tonight the pathfinders will close the Sabbath with a vespers on the work of ADRA and ACS at the _____’s house. Bring vege-links.”
 - g. Are Jesus the Word of God uplifted in every part of your service?
 - h. Do you have connection cards for visitors to fill out in the pews/chairs?
4. Lasting Impressions
- a. Does your congregation seek to engage visitors after the service?
 - b. Are your visitors invited back?
 - c. Are your visitors invited to a meal after every service?
 - d. Is your fellowship meal seen as evangelistic?
 - e. Do you have a follow-up strategy with every visitor?
 - i. Text/letter/card/email
 - ii. Invitation to upcoming events
 - f. Is your leadership team (pastor, elders, etc.) actively engaged in following up visitors?
 - g. Do you intentionally meet as a team to consider how to improve your visitor’s experience?

Additional Resources:

Greeters Ministry – A Quick Start Guide (free download from Advent Source):

<https://www.adventsource.org/ministry-plus/downloads/greeter-quick-start-guide-3859>

How to Say Hello Without Saying Goodbye, James Zackrison and Roger Ratcliffe, AdventSource

Greeter

A ministry description for local church leaders

Introduction

God asks the church to be a fellowship sharing a common purpose and continually growing in faith. Paul describes the church as Christ's "body" (Eph. 1:22).

People experience the presence of Jesus Christ in the world through the ministry of the church. When your local church serves the needs of people, members and non-members, it is an expression of the love of Christ. The church is a servant body, created for service. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

Christ calls every member of the church into ministry. The church is "a kingdom of priests" (I Peter 2:9). As a greeter, you are a minister. Every Christian believer is called to ministry, gifted by the holy Spirit, and in baptism ordained for ministry. (Eph. 4:11-12) Shortly after Pentecost, the gift of greeting or hospitality (Romans 12:13, I Tim. 3:2, I Peter 4:9) was first exercised specifically for the church and those whom Christ died to save. As believers praised God, they had favor with people. Their love for one another attracted others to their fellowship and "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).

God supplies each person in the church with the resources for ministry—scripture, spiritual power, God's character, and spiritual gifts. A greeter is equipped for his or her ministry by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These spiritual gifts are special abilities given by the Holy Spirit to make their ministry effective and build up the body of Christ.

When a person steps into a church for the first time, he or she evaluates the atmosphere. He asks himself: "Will they accept me? Will it be easy to make friends? Will my spiritual and personal needs be met? Will it be easy to find my way around? Will my family like it here?"

The newcomer will quickly come to some conclusions during the first few minutes. First impressions are often lasting impressions. Consequently, the ministry of the greeters is one of the most important things that happens in any congregation! Sometimes it is called "foyer ministry."

Although a greeter's love should be no stronger than is the love found in the rest of the body of Christ, nevertheless the greeter performs a major role in ensuring that people see and experience that love. In Christ, you have received God's unconditional love, and, in Christ, you are called to extend that same unconditional love to others. The ministry of greeting is perhaps one of the most crucial in the church because it is one of the most visible. It is a ministry vital to the saving work of the church.

Duties of the Greeter

Although the program varies from church to church, the ministry to which a person is called when he or she becomes a greeter can best be described in the following ways:

- 1. Contact with newcomers.** When you notice unknown guests, introduce yourself first, extend a welcome, and then ask for the visitors' names.

While the visitors write in your guest book or complete registration cards, call over an usher or deacon. Introduce the visitors to this person who will show them to a seat or help them in finding Sabbath School classes, the parents' room, etc. It is especially important that you make a record of each visitor and turn this over to the pastor or interest coordinator. This is an important source of new members when properly followed up.

2. **Take an interest in people.** The congregation depends on the greeters to make their church personal. If you really care about people, they will be able to see it. Some are shy and will want you to preserve their dignity by not being too forward. Others are gregarious and want to be asked questions. Try to sense needs such as those who are confused about the location of children's activities or need access to a rest room, etc. Be as helpful as you can.
3. **Invitations to dinner.** Your local church should have a plan to make sure that visitors are either invited to lunch at someone's home or to a church fellowship dinner. Larger churches organize groups to host dinner every Sabbath. Small churches will have potlucks usually once a month.
4. **Listen for deeper needs.** People come to church burdened with hurts, disappointments and personal crises. As you have opportunity, steer hurting people to those in the church family to whom they can turn for help—the pastor, professional or peer counselors, teachers, physicians, social workers, Adventist Community Services leaders, and others. Use your knowledge to meet people at their points of need.
5. **Distribute materials.** Your task as a greeter has more to do with relationships than mechanical aspects like handing out the church bulletin. At the same time bulletins are also important! Many churches have a special handout or packet for visitors also. This often includes a map of the Sabbath School rooms, some history and a list of week-day activities like Bible study groups, Pathfinder Club, health classes, the Adventist Community Services center, family life workshops and Bible seminars. If your church does not have something like this, perhaps the greeters should meet to prepare one.

Resources

For a list of recommended resources, free downloads and websites visit MinistryKits.AdventSource.org

For a complete list of resources visit AdventSource.org, select the store tab and then your ministry.

You can call *AdventSource* at 402.486.8800 for additional information or if you have questions about ministry. For ministry-related articles, videos, and free downloads visit AdventSource.org.

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HEAD GREETER

Purpose

Responsible for making the guests and members feel a warm welcome when entering Church. To secure names of visitors to use as a follow-up.

Term

One or two years, depending on the local church officer election cycle.

Authority

Not applicable.

Accountability

To the Pastor and Church Board.

Responsibilities

1. To greet people entering the Church for Sabbath School and Church.
2. To invite visitors to sign the guest registry.
3. To become acquainted with the guests.
4. To bring to the attention of the Pastor any person who indicates an interest in our faith. Fill out an interest card for Pastor.
5. To see that guests are invited home for dinner.
6. To plan and distribute the schedule of greeter responsibility on a rotating basis.
7. Makes sure that the attendance is taken.

Qualifications

1. A committed born-again Christian and sound in the faith.
2. Example in Christian and family living.
3. Returns faithful tithe to the local church.
4. Dresses according to the highest Christian standards.
5. Friendly, pleasant person.
6. Gift of hospitality.

RECEPTIONIST OR GREETER

Purpose

The role of the receptionist or greeter is to make the atmosphere of the church warm and inviting. The receptionist's task is to set the climate for the Sabbath School and make others feel comfortable, welcomed, and loved. They are to make friends with strangers.

Term

One or two years, depending on the local church officer election cycle.

Accountability

Responsible to the assistant superintendent for hospitality or in larger churches there may be a receptionist committee with one person acting as chairperson. Receptionists will work closely with the deacons or ushers.

Responsibilities

1. Become acquainted with the regular members so they can recognize visitors upon arrival.
2. When approaching guests introduce themselves first, extend a welcome, then ask for the visitor's names.
3. Introduce the person to someone who will show them a seat or help them find S.S. classes or divisions as needed.
4. Introduce newcomers to one or two other people in the church with whom they might feel comfortable because of shared ages or interests.
5. Try to sense the needs of people arriving in church for the first time. Help them with such needs as to where to find the children's rooms, where to hang coats, the location of restrooms, the location of the parent's room as well as a variety of classes and where they meet.

Qualifications

1. Committed born-again Christian and sound in the faith.
2. Example in Christian and family living.
3. Returns a faithful tithe to the local church.
4. Dresses according to the highest Christian standards.
5. Has a warm, friendly, outgoing personality. Is not afraid to approach strangers and make them feel welcomed.

Support and Resources

1. The Sabbath School Handbook, NAD 2000 edition.

Time Commitment:

Three (3) hours a month. The receptionist should be on duty 30 minutes before the first service begins and should continue at least until the sermon begins. (This would be whether S.S. precedes the worship service or not.) In large congregations the receptionist may be asked to attend a receptionist's committee once or twice during the year.

Department Ministry Plans Greeter & Hospitality Ministry

Our Mission: The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to make disciples of all people (Matthew 28:16-20), communicating the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and unite with His remnant Church, discipling them to serve Him as Lord and preparing them for His soon return.

Date Created/Revised: _____

Scheduled Department Meeting Dates: _____

Qualifications:

1. A committed born-again Christian and sound in the faith.
2. Example in Christian and family living.
3. Bears a deep and earnest burden for souls.
4. Active in truth-sharing, personal witnessing.
5. Returns faithful tithe to the local church.
6. Maintains high standards of dress and personal grooming.
7. Punctual, responsible, and reliable.
8. Able to relate kindly and lovingly to others.
9. Has a warm and friendly disposition.
10. Able to socially connect with strangers quickly.
11. Attentive to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of others.

Responsibilities & Actions Plans:

Greeting

- Develop a greeter's schedule.
- Prepare spiritually to minister Christ's love to members and visitors.
- Endeavor to welcome each member by name.
- Be friendly, smile, and maintain good eye contact.
- Open church doors for entering or exiting members/visitor.
- Be prepared to assist members and visitors during inclement weather.
- Distribute bulletins.
- Know and be prepared to share where each Sabbath School class is for each age and direct persons to appropriate class.
- Encourage visitors to sign guest book (including contact information).
- In a friendly way, ask visitors what brings them to church.
- Notify pastor of any visitor who expresses interest in knowing more about our faith.

Action Plan: _____

Hospitality

- Encourage every visitor to fill out a visitor card.
- Give gift packages to visitors.
- Make sure every visitor receives a lunch invitation.
- Send “thank you for attending” cards to visitors.

Action Plan: _____

How can greeters and hospitality team members department model the overall mission of soul-winning and discipleship to the church?

List any additional goals or objectives for your department:

Additional resources and support are available by contacting the Michigan Conference at 517-316-1500 and asking for the Personal Ministries Department.